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SUBJ: HR DESIGN NEWS CORNER: REFLECTING BACK, DHS TODAY, 09 APRIL, 2004.

1. EMPLOYEE INPUT TO THE DESIGN OF THE NEW HR SYSTEM HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE IMPORTANT. DURING THE PAST YEAR, DHS HAS PROVIDED MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO VOICE YOUR THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE NEW HR SYSTEM. LAST SPRING AND SUMMER, THE DHS HR DESIGN TEAM, COMPRISED OF DHS, OPM, AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES, CONDUCTED 64 NATIONWIDE TOWN HALL AND FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS TO GAIN INPUT FROM EMPLOYEES IN ALL MAJOR DHS COMPONENTS. DHS WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT BACK ON SOME OF THE MAJOR THEMES THAT AROSE DURING THOSE SESSIONS AND DETAIL HOW THEY IMPACTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS FOR A NEW HR SYSTEM.

2. STREAMLINE THE APPEALS PROCESS:

THERE WAS STRONG SUPPORT FOR STREAMLINING THE APPEALS PROCESS. EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS AGREED THAT LENGTHY PROCEDURES DID NOT BENEFIT ANYONE. THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS RECOMMEND A SIMPLER AND FASTER APPEALS PROCESS THAT WILL LEAD TO A QUICKER RESOLUTION OF ISSUES WHILE STILL MAINTAINING AN AVENUE TO INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND DUE PROCESS. EMPLOYEES WOULD STILL BE ALLOWED TO APPEAL TO THE MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD (MSPB) BUT MSPB APPEALS WOULD BE STREAMLINED BY SHORTENING PROCESSING, FILING, AND DECISION TIME FRAMES.

3. IMPROVE THE CURRENT GS SYSTEM:

WHILE MANY EMPLOYEES EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR RETAINING THE CURRENT GS SYSTEM, THEY ALSO SUGGESTED MANY IMPROVEMENTS. THE PROPOSED SYSTEM INCORPORATES SEVERAL KEY FEATURES BASED ON THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS, SUCH AS:

- A. A SINGLE SYSTEM FOR DHS TO RESOLVE INCONSISTENCIES.
- B. OCCUPATIONAL PAY RANGES THAT ARE MORE REFLECTIVE OF LOCAL LABOR MARKET RATES.
- C. PAY FOR SPECIAL SKILLS.
- D. ELIMINATION OF TIME-IN-GRADE REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION.
- E. GREATER REWARDS FOR HIGH PERFORMERS.
- F. CLEARLY DEFINED CAREER PATHS.

ADDITIONALLY, THE PROPOSED SYSTEM CALLS FOR NO REDUCTION IN EMPLOYEES' CURRENT PAY OR BENEFITS AS A RESULT OF TRANSITION TO THE NEW SYSTEM.

4. ENSURE A CONSISTENT AND FAIR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

EMPLOYEES EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT POTENTIAL FAVORITISM BY SUPERVISORS IN ASSESSING AND REWARDING PERFORMANCE. IN RESPONSE, THE PROPOSED SYSTEM INCLUDES SEVERAL FEATURES TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY AND FAIRNESS SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW BOARDS (PRBS) TO OVERSEE THE PROCESS. ADDITIONALLY, DHS IS COMMITTED TO SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN SUPERVISORY TRAINING ON SETTING GOOD STANDARDS, ESTABLISHING VALID MEASURES, AND ADMINISTERING THE NEW SYSTEM IN A FAIR AND EQUITABLE MANNER.

5. DHS AND THE COAST GUARD THANK ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NEW HR SYSTEM. YOUR FEEDBACK WILL HELP TO ENSURE THAT THE NEW SYSTEM MEETS EMPLOYEES' NEEDS. PLEASE CONTINUE TO SEND YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HR MAILBOX AT HRDESIGN@DHS.GOV.

6. Q&A:

Q: I READ THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS BUT I FIND THEM VERY CONFUSING AND LACKING DETAIL, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF PAY AND

CLASSIFICATION. WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED FOR OUR NEW HR SYSTEM?

A: THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS, WHICH ARE POSTED ON WWW.EPA.GOV/EDOCKET, REPRESENT ONLY THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S NEW HR SYSTEM. MANY DETAILS OF THE SYSTEM WILL BE DEVELOPED AFTER THE FINAL REGULATIONS ARE PUBLISHED LATE THIS SUMMER. WE INCLUDED AS MUCH INFORMATION AS WE COULD IN THESE REGULATIONS HOWEVER IN SOME AREAS, SUCH AS ADVERSE ACTIONS, WE WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE DETAIL BECAUSE WE ARE PROPOSING ONE CONSOLIDATED SYSTEM FOR THE WHOLE DEPARTMENT. IN OTHER AREAS, SUCH AS PAY AND CLASSIFICATION, WE ARE LOOKING AT A WIDE RANGE OF OCCUPATIONAL JOB CATEGORIES AND GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS SO IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAIL AT THIS TIME BECAUSE THERE IS STILL SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTAL WORK TO BE DONE. AFTER FINAL REGULATIONS ARE PUBLISHED, WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION IN THESE AREAS.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS CAN BE FOUND ON THE DHS INTERNET AND INTRANET SITES:

A. DHS INTERNET:

[HTTP://WWW.DHS.GOV/DHSPUBLIC/DISPLAY?THEME=39&CONTENT=3392](http://WWW.DHS.GOV/DHSPUBLIC/DISPLAY?THEME=39&CONTENT=3392)

B. DHS INTRANET:

[HTTPS://DHSONLINE.DHS.GOV](https://DHSONLINE.DHS.GOV)

8. TO VIEW THE HR SYSTEM INTRANET PAGE, CLICK ON "DHS HR SYSTEM HOME PAGE" UNDER MY SERVICES SECTION, OR CLICK ON THE "MANAGEMENT" TAB AT THE TOP OF THE INTRANET HOMEPAGE. ON THE NEXT PAGE, CLICK ON THE "PERSONNEL" TAB THEN CLICK ON THE "NEW HR SYSTEM" LINK RIGHT ABOVE THE PERSONNEL LINKS CHANNEL. YOU MUST BE ON A DHS COMPUTER TO ACCESS THIS SITE.

9. THESE SITES CONTAIN:

A. TWO POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS ON THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS: THE "SLIDESHOW/SHORT" PRESENTATION COMPARES THE PROPOSED SYSTEM TO THE CURRENT SYSTEM. THE "LONG" PRESENTATION PROVIDES ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE PROPOSED SYSTEM.

B. A FACT SHEET ON THE PROPOSED SYSTEM.

C. A VIDEOTAPED ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY, ADMIRAL JAMES LOY; UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT, JANET HALE; AND CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER, RON JAMES.

D. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HR DESIGN PROCESS.

10. ADDITIONALLY, ALL OF THE PAST HR DESIGN NEWS CORNER ARTICLES CAN BE FOUND ON THE "NEW HR SYSTEM" INTRANET PAGE.

11. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.

12. RELEASED BY RONALD R. KOGUT, CHIEF, OFFICE OF CIVILIAN PERSONNEL.

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